

It was hoped in this way to stem the tide of religious vocations. The cry was sent up "Les cures sac au dos"—Let the priests wear the knapsack as other men. This law had to-day sent into the trenches and barracks over 20,000 young priest-soldiers. It was the influence of these young priest-soldiers which has worked such wondrous changes on the army and manhood of the nation.

Among the clergy at the front were three bishops—Mgr. Ruch, Coadjutor of Nancy, a "brancardier" (stretcher-bearer); Mgr. Perros, Vicar-Apostolic of Siam, 2nd Lieutenant in an infantry regiment; and Mgr. Mourey, Bishop of the Gold Coast, a simple private and under the orders of a young curé. "Imagine," said the lecturer, "our dear Bishop of London a private soldier under the command of one of the curates of his Diocese." (Laughter.) Many ecclesiastics of distinction, including men of great learning or scholarship, had obeyed the call to military service, and taken up the sword in defence of their country, special dispensations having been granted by the Bishops of France to exempt them from the censure which is upon the cleric who sheds blood. They were also released from the obligation to say the breviary, and allowed to say the rosary instead; they were told to say Mass as often as opportunity allowed, and, above all, to make themselves efficient French soldiers winning the approbation of their senior officers by their self-sacrifice. And it was well-known that whenever volunteers were called for to perform some dangerous task the French soldier-priest was the first to step forward saying, "I am an unmarried man."

As giving some slight insight into the spirit of these priests fighting in the trenches, the lecturer read passages from two letters. The first was from a young priest who exerted a splendid influence in the workmen's clubs of his parish in the Diocese of Paris and was a sergeant in his regiment. He was killed in Lorraine on September 6. A week before his death he wrote to his curé:—"I have made the sacrifice of my life thoroughly, and I trust cheerfully. I offer it for all I love—my parents, my friends, and especially for my dear parish of Le Perreux, that I love more than ever. I believe that the blood of

the priests of France is necessary for the redemption of our nation." The second was from the vicaire of a tiny parish to his cure:—"In the early morning I recite some prayers aloud; the men join me in singing the "Kyrie," "Gloria," "Credo," and "Agnus Dei," in unison with the Masses that are being celebrated throughout the world. Next comes breakfast and perhaps a game of cards, varied by occasional firing at the enemy. Towards evening I address a few words, to the men and say the rosary aloud. At night half the men try to sleep while the other half keep watch. Again the watchers recite the rosary in a whisper. We have made the sacrifices of our lives and complain of nothing. Sometimes I take up my post at the further end of the trench and remain there. I hear confessions for hours together."

Truly it might be said that these dark and muddy trenches with all their squalid misery, were very near to the gates of Heaven.

There was something deeply touching in the circumstances that had compelled these men to take up arms, men of peace who preach the Gospel of Love, whose ministry, education, and inclination must be so utterly opposed to the work they had to do. Yet they have never faltered in the doing of it; they did not seek the soldier's life; it was the last thing they would seek, but they felt it to be an obligation and a patriotic duty.

Mr Cardew concluded his lecture with an appeal on behalf of the charitable work among the British poor resident in Paris, pointing out that for them no help could be given by the French funds, and they were also outside the scope of the English National Relief Fund. They included many work-people, persons connected with the theatrical business and those employed about the racing stables. The war had affected them severely, and owing to the strain that had been put upon the British Charitable Fund in earlier months there was urgent need of help. He would like to be able to go back with £2,000 to tide over the winter.

The Bishop of London, in expressing the thanks of the audience to the lecturer, cordially endorsed the appeal he had made,

Church Gazette Subscriptions.

Rev. J. Hobbs, Te Puke £2, Wai-pawa Parish £1 8s., Mrs Sedgwick, Kensington, W., London 4s., Rev. J. A. McNickle, Pukehou 10s.

Parochial News.

S. Augustine's, Napier.

Vicar: Rev. Canon Tuke.

The results of our scholars' papers in the recent Diocesan Sunday School examination are gratifying to both our teachers and our scholars. The examiners in both papers set questions which tested the scholars' knowledge of the subjects, and put them in plain, straightforward language. The Vicar expressed his pleasure at the School again doing so well, congratulated the teachers on their efforts, and asked the congregation to support the School by volunteering as teachers, of whom there were urgently needed three or four. One, a former parishioner, Mr Martin, has kindly offered his services and begun teaching.

The annual outing of our scholars to Farndon Park took place on February 2nd, when the day proved very hot but beautifully fine. The children returned well satisfied with a good and happy day's recreation in that ideal picnic ground where plenty of shade can be found and the sea breeze can nearly always be counted upon. A great many of our mothers went out for the day with their infants in arms, and many other visitors took advantage of the outing. All sorts of games were played from morning till late in the afternoon. Rounders and cricket were energetically indulged in in spite of the heat. If every School had teachers who so willingly threw themselves heart and soul into the games, and helped the children interested, there would be very happy outings. It was the last that the Vicar would probably have, with his present scholars, whom he will find it hard to leave, and those splendidly loyal teachers who have given such faithful service. In Mr T. Pallot we have had a secretary and treasurer who has done yeoman service for years.

Parish almanacks from Messrs Mowbray, and the Home Word's Office, London, are to hand, and can be procured for threepence each from the Vicar. They are, as usual, very good, and will be appreciated after last year's not coming to hand.

The Church Scouts' Troop, under Scoutmaster Bonishae, attended the morning service on Sunday, February 13th. They are progressing, and their smart appearance and good marching were favourably noted,